

Message Text

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43/53

ACTION AF-06

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R 101222Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2354

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 2184

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (FOR EO, TAGS AND SUBJECT LINES)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, RH, ZA

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: NKOMO - SMITH TALKS AND NKOMO TRAVEL PLANS

1. SUMMARY. ACCORDING ZAMBIAN STATE HOUSE SOURCE, RHODESIAN NATIONALIST LEADER JOSHUA NKOMO MAY HAVE BEEN TALKING TO IAN SMITH ABOUT POSSIBILITIES FOR APPORTIONMENT OF CABINET PORT-FOLIOS OVER VARIOUS TIME PERIODS. NKOMO VISITING LUSAKA AGAIN ON NOVEMBER 14 AFTER WHICH HE WILL GO TO DAR AND LOURENCO MARQUES TO TRY WOO NYERERE AND MACHEL. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING NOV. 9 MEETING AT STATE HOUSE WITH PRESIDENTIAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER MARK CHONA ON ANGOLAN RECOGNITION (SEPTEL), I SOUGHT ZAMBIAN ASSESSMENT OF STATUS NKOMO - IAN SMITH NEGOTIATIONS FOR RHODESIAN CONSTITUTIONAL SETTLEMENT. CHONA SAID NKOMO HAD MADE "SOME PROGRESS" IN TWO MEETINGS WITH SMITH. CHONA HINTED TALKS MAY HAVE GOTTEN INTO SUBJECT OF TRANSITIONAL TIME FRAME AND OF APPORTIONMENT OF CABINET POSTS.

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AFTER CONSIDERABLE HEDGING, CHONA ADMITTED THAT HE HAD TALKED

WITH NKOMO, DURING LATTER'S OCTOBER 26/27 VISIT TO LUSAKA, ABOUT SEVERAL SETTLEMENT POSSIBILITIES. THESE RANGE FROM A SIX MONTHS TRANSITION PERIOD WITH FIFTY-FIFTY DIVISION OF CABINET POSTS BETWEEN RHODESIAN FRONT AND ANC TO A THREE YEAR TRANSITION WITH APPORTIONMENT DROPPING TO THIRTY-SEVENTY C TO TWENTY-EIGHTY, THE FRONT RECEIVING FEWER POSTS THE LONGER THE TRANSITION. CHONA THOUGHT THAT THREE YEAR TRANSITION WOULD "KILL" NKOMO'S CHANCES AND SAID TWO YEARS WAS PROBABLY OUTSIDE LIMIT ACCEPTABLE TO NATIONALISTS. CHONA URGED THAT ALL INTERESTED THIRD PARTIES, INCLUDING US, WOULD BE HELPING BOTH SMITH AND NKOMO IF THEY PRESSED FOR THIS FORMULA (I.E., TWO YEARS TRANSITION OR LESS) AS BASIS FOR SETTLEMENT.

3. IN REFLECTING ON WHAT FUTURE MIGHT HOLD, CHONA STATED THE OBVIOUS -- THAT NKOMO WILL SUCCEED OR FAIL TO EXTENT HE ABLE TO PICK UP THE PIECES OF ABORTED VICTORIA FALLS MEETING AND OBTAIN A SETTLEMENT ON TERMS MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE TO RHODESIAN WHITES AND BLACKS. IMPLIED THAT NKOMO HAD GOTTEN RECONFIRMATION OF SMITH'S ACCEPTANCE OF PRINCIPLE OF MAJORITY RULE. DESCRIBING NKOMO AS IMPRESSIVE, SHREWD, AND ACCOMMODATING, CHONA CLAIMED THAT ANC DEPUTY PRESIDENT GABELLAH AND SECRETARY GENERAL CHAVUNDUKA (HITHERTO AMONG MUZOREWA'S SUPPORTERS INSIDE RHODESIA) ARE NOW LEANING IN NKOMO'S DIRECTION. SAID MUZOREWA HAS MADE THREE "FATAL ERRORS": EXPELLING NKOMO, EXPELLING JASON MOYO, AND SETTING UP ZIMBABWE LIBERATION COMMITTEE VIRTUALLY TO EXCLUDE EX-ZAPU LEADERS. CHONA THOUGHT MUZOREWA WAS FINISHED POLITICALLY BECAUSE HE LACKED JUDGMENT, ESPECIALLY IN CHOICE OF HIS COUNSELORS. JAMES CHIKEREMA NO LONGER REALLY COUNTS AS ANC LEADER. AS FOR NDABANINGI SITHOLE, CHONA BELIEVES HIM TO BE MOST CAPABLE OF THREE (MUZOREWA, CHIKEREMA, SITHOLE) BUT SITHOLE HAD LOST CONSIDERABLE FOLLOWING AMONG RHODESIANS. NOT INCONCEIVABLE THAT IF NKOMO IS ABLE TO DELIVER ON A SETTLEMENT, THESE ANC LEADERS COULD COME ON BOARD NKOMO'S TRAIN.

4. CHONA CONFIRMED THAT NKOMO WILL BE IN LUSAKA NOVEMBER 14 TO SEE PRESIDENT KAUNDA AND THEN PROCEED TO TANZANIA NOVEMBER 15 TO SEE PRESIDENT NYERERE JUST PRIOR LATTER'S DEPARTURE ON STATE VISIT TO UK. NKOMO WILL TRAVEL TO LOURENCO MARQUES FOLLOWING DAY TO SEE SAMORA MACHEL. ASKED IF NYERERE AND MACHEL STILL PRO-SITHOLE AND IF NKOMO WOULD BE TRYING WOO THEIR SUPPORT, CONFIDENTIAL

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CHONA DENIED THEY WERE STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF ONE ANC LEADER OVER ANOTHER, RATHER THEY ARE PRO-UNITY OF ANC AND PRO-SETTLEMENT. UNABASHED, CHONA SAID THAT ZAMBIANS ARE ENCOUNTERING FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES IN FINDING AND FUNDING A PLANE TO BRING NKOMO UP FROM RHODESIA AND TO FLY HIM TO DAR AND LOURENCO MARQUES.

5. IN AN ASIDE, CHONA SAID ZAMBIANS ARE ANNOYED WITH BRITISH BECAUSE LATTER TRIED TO ARRANGE FOR VISIT TO ZAMBIA BY MINISTER

OF STATE DAVID ENNALS PRIOR TO NYERERE'S TRIP TO UK. CHONA SAID IT SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSING TO HAVE TO REMIND BRITISH THAT NYERERE, NOT KAUNDA, IS CHAIRMAN OF OAU GROUP WHICH HAS MANDATE FOR FOLLOWING RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT ISSUE. ALSO, THAT BY DECISION OF FOUR PRESIDENTS (KAUNDA, NYERERE, MACHEL, AND KHAMA) THEY HAVE WITHDRAWN FROM ACTIVE ENCOURAGEMENT OF NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, LEAVING IT TO PRINCIPALS TO SORT OUT THEMSELEVES.

6. WE KNOW KAUNDA AND CHONA NOW REGARD NKOMO AS THE BEST AND PERHAPS LAST CHANCE TO OBTAIN A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. WE ALSO KNOW THE ZAMBIAN PRESIDENT IS TROUBLED ABOUT SOVIET SUPPORT TO NKOMO AND QUESTIONED HIM CLOSELY ON THIS POINT DURING LATTER'S LAST VISIT HERE. NKOMO TOOK THE POSITION HE GETS NOTHING FROM THE WEST AND TAKES IT FROM A PROVEN SOURCE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT OVER PAST TEN YEARS AND WITHOUT SHAME. WHILE CHONA DID NOT ARGUE FOR USG TO SUPPLANT SOVIETS AS A SOURCE OF SUPPORT FOR NKOMO, THIS WAS IMPLICIT IN HIS CRITICAL EMPHASIS ON SOVIET PRESENCE IN AFRICA AND HIS REMARK THAT HE WISHED USG WOULD BECOME MORE INVOLVED IN RHODESIA, ALSO HIS DELIBERATELY CASTING NKOMO IN FAVORABLE LIGHT TO ME.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: CHONA CONFIRMED WHAT HOME AFFAIRS MINISTER MILNER HAD TOLD ME EARLIER IN DAY, THAT NKOMO WISHES TO SEE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR WHILE IN LUSAKA NOV 14. FOR USE IN EVENT NKOMO DOES CONTACT EMBASSY, HAS DEPARTMENT ANY INSTRUCTIONS OR SPECIAL GUIDANCE REGARDING US POSITIONS ON RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT ISSUES BEYOND THOSE PROVIDED IN SECRETARY'S SEPT 23 TOAST TO OAU AMBASSADORS AND IN CONG. FRASER'S OCT 9 STATEMENT BEFORE UNGA FOURTH COMMITTEE?
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